

# **The Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award**

## **2008-09 Application**

A legendary couple in the Palmetto State, former U.S. Secretary of Education and South Carolina Governor Dick Riley and his late wife, Tunky, were honored in 2002 by the S.C. School Improvement Council Board of Trustees with the creation of this named award. The engraving on the inaugural award states: "In honor and recognition of two people who sparked the flame of education improvement in South Carolina."

The *Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award* is presented yearly to a School Improvement Council that demonstrates, in the spirit of the Rileys, *exemplary leadership and action resulting in improved public education in their community*. All School Improvement Councils in South Carolina that have been convened for at least one year are eligible to apply. SICs scoring 55 points or more on their Level One application will be listed on the SIC Honor Roll. Riley Award winners, not including Honorable Mentions, may not reapply for three years.

Participating in this awards process is an opportunity for councils to celebrate their achievements, share strategies with other councils, ensure their compliance with state law, and provide much deserved recognition for hard-working volunteers.

The awards process has three levels. In **Level One**, SICs tell the story of their accomplishments in the *previous school year* through a Case Statement. Level One applications count for 65 points. SICs scoring at least 55 points at this level will be entered on the SIC Honor Roll and will receive a certificate of achievement. Up to 20 of the Honor Roll SICs will be chosen as semi-finalists to compete in **Level Two**, which demonstrates that a council is in compliance with state law. This level is worth 35 points and includes the opportunity to earn an additional 10 bonus points. Five of the semi-finalists will be chosen for the **Winners Level**. An independent panel of judges will evaluate the five finalists and choose the Riley Award winning SIC. The remaining finalists will receive Honorable Mention awards.

### **TIMELINE**

- **Level One applications** must be *received* in the SC-SIC office by 5:00 p.m. on **Monday, November 17, 2008**.
- SC-SIC will announce Honor Roll members and notify semi-finalists for Level Two on or before **Monday, January 12, 2009**.
- **Notebooks and Bonus material** from semi-finalists for **Level Two** must be *received* in the SC-SIC office by 5:00 p.m. on **Monday, February 2, 2009**.
- Five finalists will be notified on or before **Monday, February 23, 2009**.
- The winner of the *Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award* will be announced during a special awards event **on a date to be announced**.

## **LEVEL ONE APPLICATION – Maximum 65 Points Possible**

Please submit the following information to the Riley Award Committee:

### **1. Cover Page – 5 Points**

- Name and address of school.
- Name of principal with phone number and email address.
- Complete contact information for the SIC Chair including home or work address and phone and email if available.
- Name of school district.

*TIP: No need to be fancy here. No points will be deducted for a plain sheet of paper. Points will be deducted if ALL of the information requested is not included!*

### **2. Case Statement – 45 Points**

- The Case Statement is a narrative describing how the SIC identified needs and challenges in the school and then responded to create positive outcomes for the school and its community. The narrative must include: issue(s), action(s) taken and result(s). Outcomes must have occurred during the 2007-08 school year, but activities may have been initiated in the previous school year(s). Include appropriate school demographic information.
- The statement must be written collaboratively by the SIC and signed by the current chair. It does not have to be on letterhead or in letter format.
- The statement must not exceed three (3) pages.
- Use 10 point or larger Times New Roman or Arial fonts only.

*TIP: Include demographic information about your school community including the socio-economic make-up of the students attending your school, whether the community is urban or rural, the types of businesses in the area, the kinds of occupations parents have, number of single parent families, etc. What sorts of challenges do the community demographics present for the school? How have these challenges affected the actions of the SICs? How have state and federal accountability requirements affected the school? How has the SIC responded?*

### **3. Three Letters of Support - 15 Points**

- Letters of Support must expand and reflect upon the information given in the Case Statement.
- One letter of support MUST be from the principal.
- Two additional Letters of Support may be written by anyone the SIC chooses, including, but not limited to: a student, parent, community member, business supporter, district staff, or school board member.
- Each letter of support is worth five (5) points.
- Each letter may not exceed one (1) page and should be addressed to the Riley Award Committee.
- Use 10 point or larger Times New Roman or Arial fonts only or may be handwritten.

*TIP: Be sure that your letters of support refer to accomplishments identified in your case statement. Hearing how much someone “likes” your school or enjoyed the carnival sponsored by the PTA will not earn points from the judges.*

**APPLICATIONS MUST NOT EXCEED SEVEN (7) PAGES, INCLUDING THE COVER SHEET, AND SHOULD BE STAPLED. DO NOT BIND, CLIP OR PUT IN A FOLDER.**

**SEND THE ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES OF THE APPLICATION TO SC-SIC BY NOVEMBER 17, 2008. MAKE AN ADDITIONAL COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS; YOU WILL NEED IT IF YOUR APPLICATION RECEIVES SEMI-FINALIST STATUS AND COMPETES IN LEVEL TWO.**

## **LEVEL TWO APPLICATION – Maximum 45 Points Possible (Including BONUS POINTS)**

Applicants receiving at least 55 points in Level One will be named to the SIC Honor Roll. Up to 20 Honor Roll SICs will be chosen as semi-finalists for the Riley Award and will compete in Level Two of the awards process. Councils chosen to compete as semi-finalists will be notified by **January 12, 2009**.

Semi-finalists are expected to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the basic components required by law as detailed in the *School Improvement Council Handbook – “The Basics.”* Submit a standard size, clearly labeled and tabbed THREE RING BINDER containing the following items:

1. **A copy of the Level One application.** (Points awarded in Level One will be carried over.)

*TIP: Make sure you include this in your binder to avoid losing points!*

2. **Membership list demonstrating composition according to state law - 10 Points**

- Minimum of two parents elected by their peers
- Minimum of two teachers elected by their peers
- Minimum of two students elected by their peers (high school only)
- Community members appointed by the principal
- Elected members = 2/3 of Council
- Appointed members = 1/3 of Council
- Ex-officio members

*TIP: A table showing the name of each person, their category of membership (elected, appointed, or ex-officio) and if they are serving as a parent, teacher, student, community member, etc., easily demonstrates the above for the judges. List must be from the 2007-08 school year.*

3. **Copy of bylaws - 5 Points**

*TIP: Check the “Sample Bylaws” on the SC-SIC website (<http://sic.sc.gov>) to be sure yours include all suggested components.*

4. **A copy of all meeting minutes or records of action for last year – 10 Points**

*TIP: Include minutes from meetings of the full SIC. Subcommittee minutes are not required.*

5. **A copy of the SIC’s 2008 Report to the Parents – 5 Points**

*TIP: This is the report published by April 30, 2008.*

6. **A copy of the school’s 2008 S.C. School Report Card – 5 Points**

*TIP: This is the report card just received in November, which contains the narrative section written by the principal in collaboration with the SIC and submitted to the S.C. Department of Education at the end of the last school year.*

**BONUS POINTS** - Semi-finalists may earn up to **10 Bonus Points** if they submit additional evidence to support their application as an exemplary SIC. This evidence may include newsletters, videos, examples of incentive items, newspaper articles, t-shirts, etc. Bonus items do not have to fit inside the binder, but should be clearly labeled so judges know which school they belong to. It is recommended that the SIC include one or more carefully chosen items; there is no need to submit a large amount of supportive material. **THESE ITEMS WILL NOT BE RETURNED.**

*TIP: Be sure all items submitted relate to the SIC! Make sure the judges can see how each item relates to activities in your Case Statement. Points may be lost if judges cannot easily locate the required evidence in your binder.*

**SEMI-FINALISTS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THE ABOVE INFORMATION BY FEBRUARY 2, 2009.**

## WINNERS LEVEL

The **Five Finalists** chosen by the Awards Committee for the Winners Level will be notified by **February 23, 2009**.

An independent panel of judges who have expertise in school/community activities and do not serve on the S.C. School Improvement Council Board of Trustees will review both Level One and Level Two applications from all five finalists will decide the winner of the *Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award*.

Two representatives from each of the five SICs selected for the Winners Level will be invited for a special awards program as guests of the SC-SIC Board **at a time and place as yet to be announced**. The winner of the *Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award* will remain secret until the winner is announced during the awards ceremony. The four remaining finalists will receive Honorable Mention awards.

**MAIL applications to:**

Riley Award  
S.C. School Improvement Council  
USC College of Education  
Wardlaw Building, Suite 001  
Columbia, SC 29208

**Or DELIVER to:**

S.C. School Improvement Council  
USC College of Education  
Wardlaw Building, Suite 001  
820 Main Street  
Columbia, SC 29208

**Questions?** Call 800-868-2232 or 803-777-7658 and/or view the *Council Update* segment on applying for the Riley Award which is available in streaming video on the SC-SIC website at <http://sic.sc.gov>. To borrow a copy of this program, contact your SIC District Contact, your school media specialist or call the SC-SIC office.

**NO FAXED OR EMAILED APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**SC-SIC is not responsible for late, lost or misdirected mail or deliveries.  
Applications not submitted according to these guidelines are subject to disqualification.**

**THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES IS FINAL.**